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# A STUDY ON KNOWLEDE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE REGARDING ANAEMIA IN ANTENATAL WOMEN IN A GOVERNMENT TEACHING HOSPITAL, DEHRADUN

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Anemia in pregnancy is very common in women of reproductive age group; and its diagnosis and prompt treatment is of immense significance due to associated morbidity and mortality especially in developing countries. The anemia results in fatigue, low productivity, increased risk of premature delivery and lowered physical activity and mental concentration during childhood. **Objective-** To assess the knowledge, attitude, and practices regarding anemia amongst. **Material and methods:** A cross-sectional study was carried out on antenatal women attending the OPD in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Government Doon Medical College, Uttarakhand. Antenatal women were asked to fill a questionnaire regarding anemia so as to test their knowledge, attitudes and practices pertaining to anemia and role of their diet. **Results**: A total of 250 antenatal women attending the OPD were asked to fill a questionnaire regarding anemia so as to test their knowledge, attitudes and practices pertaining to anemia and role of their diet. It was observed that only 88(35.2 %) females were aware and practicing their knowledge of dietary source of hemoglobin during pregnancy. Majority of 145 (58 %) women were multipara of which only 123(49.2%) reported for the first time during second trimester. 112 (44.8%) women were illiterate and 152 (60.8%) women belonged to low socioeconomic status. Majority of them had obtained the knowledge through ASHA and ANM of the area.

**KEYWORDS:** Knowledge Anemia, Pregnancy, Antenatal women.

## INTRODUCTION

Anemia is the condition in which the hemoglobin concentration is below 11gm/dl for pregnant women.[1] Anemia is a common public health problem among pregnant women in the world however it is an important factor responsible for morbidity and mortality in females of reproductive age group in developing countries. Globally 1.62 billion people are anemic, among which 56 million are pregnant women.[2] According to WHO prevalence of anemia in pregnant women is as high as 51 % in developing countries in contrast to 14% in developed countries.[3]

In India it is responsible for 40 % of maternal deaths and the mortality rises up to 8 to 10 fold when the hemoglobin concentration in below 5gm/dl.[4]

According to NFHS-4, overall prevalence of anemia was 53.0% and 50.3 % respectively in women of 15-49 years of age group and in pregnant females.[5]

The risks associated with anemia are increased risk of premature delivery, low birth weight babies, inadequate iron stores in the newborn and increased risk of morbidity and mortality in perinatal and neonatal period and among pregnant females. Further during childhood it leads to lowered physical activity, mental concentration, and productivity.[6] It has been noticed that in women even mild degree of anemia leads to fatigue and reduced work capacity.[7]

To improve maternal health, and to enable every women to be aware of their health status and the importance of appropriate ANC, this study was conducted to determine the level of knowledge, attitude, and practice related to anemia among these pregnant women and to assess the awareness about their own health during pregnancy. This will be taken as baseline data and will help in the further planning of Health Intervention Program.

## AIM

The aim of this study was to assess the knowledge, attitude, and practices regarding anemia amongst antenatal patients attending teaching hospital in Dehradun.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

It was a Cross sectional study; carried out on 250 antenatal women visiting the teaching hospital over a period of four months i.e from September 2016 to December 2016. The women attending the antenatal OPD in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology were enrolled by systematic random sampling method. Informed written consent was taken from antenatal women who were willing to participate in the study. They were asked to fill a questionnaire regarding knowledge, attitude and practices related to anemia such as information about iron rich dietary sources, implementation of iron rich diet, drug compliance, source of knowledge and data was collected accordingly. Data were presented in the form of frequency and percentage.

## RESULTS

In the present study it was observed that majority 44.8% of the women belonged to less than 25 years of age and only 18.8 % of women belonged to more than 30years age group (Table -1). It was also observed that most of the women 58% were multipara while 42 % were primi (Figure -1).

**Table 1: The age group of the antenatal woman included in the study.**

| Age In Years | Number Of Antenatal Women (250) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| 19-25 | 112 | 44.8 |
| 26-30 | 91 | 36.4 |
| >30 | 47 | 18.8 |

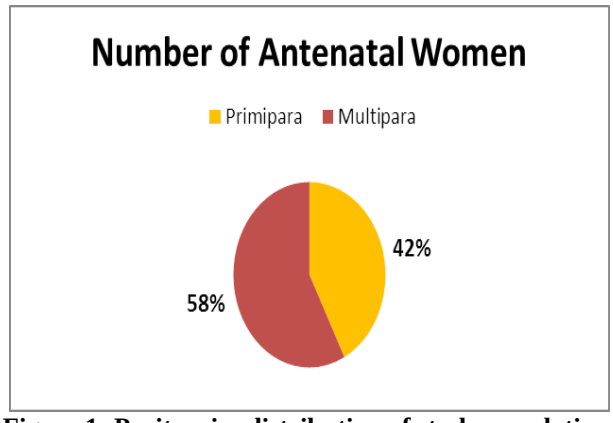


**Figure 1: Parity wise distribution of study population.**

It was also noticed in the study that 60.8% of the women belonged to lower socio economic status and only few 3.2% belonged to upper middle class. (Figure-2)

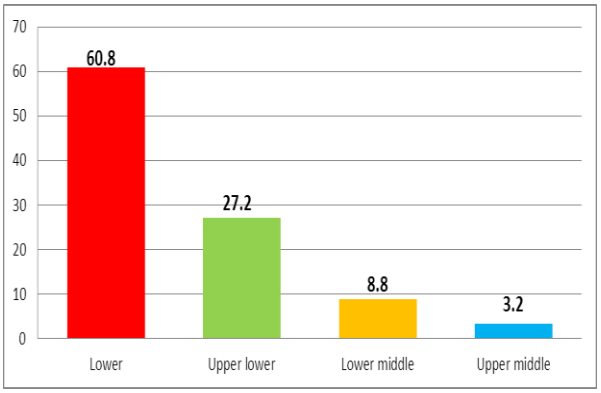


**Figure 2: The Socio Economic Status Of Antenatal Women.**

Most of the women 44.8% were illiterate and only 3.2% were found to be Graduate and Above.

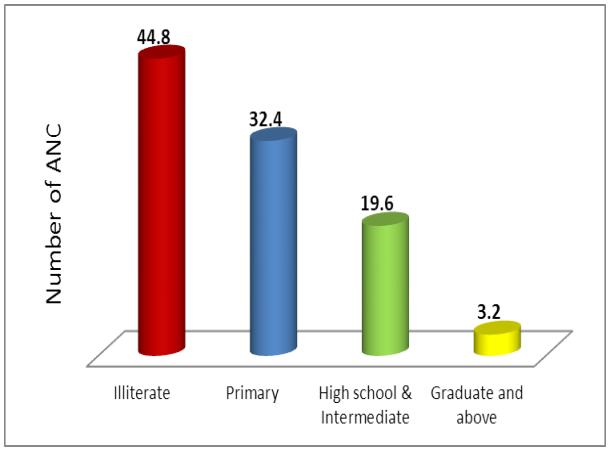


**Figure 3: The Literacy Status of All The Antenatal Women.**

About 20.4 % patients registered in the first trimester and majority 49.2% in the second trimester and 36.4 % in the third trimester.

**Table 2: The number of Antenatal Women and the Trimester in which they first reported to the hospital.**

| Trimester of pregnancy | Number of Antenatal women | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| First | 51 | 20.4 |
| Second | 123 | 49.2 |
| Third | 76 | 30.4 |

**Table 3: Knowledge and Practices of Antenatal Women regarding Anemia.**

| Knowledge Of Dietary Source | Number of Antenatal Women | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Aware and practicing | 88 | 35.2 |
| Aware but not practicing | 123 | 49.2 |
| Not aware | 49 | 19.6 |

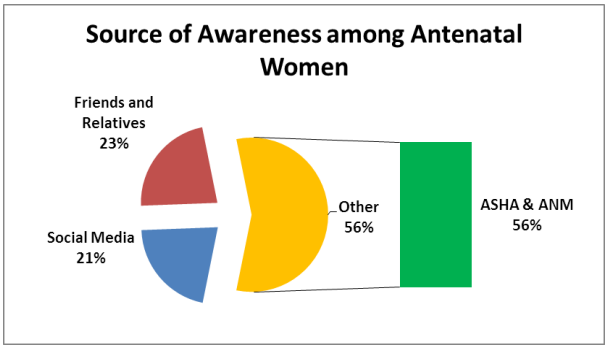


**Table 4: The various means through which the Mothers obtained their Knowledge regarding Anemia.**

It was observed that 35.2% of the women were aware of the iron rich food items and other food items to be consumed during pregnancy, however 49.2 % of the women were aware and still did not implement these food items in their daily diet (Table-3). It was also noticed in this study that 30 % of them were consuming iron tablets with water, 43 % with milk and other food items, 9 % empty stomach and 18% of the women consumed as soon as they remembered.

Most of 56.4% of the women said that the source of all the knowledge they had, was imparted to them by health workers like ANM and ASHA of the area during their home or health centre visit, 22.4% attributed it to their family and friends while the remaining 21.2% acquired it via various social media. (Figure-4).

## DISCUSSION

Anemia is one of the major public health problem throughout the world affecting all age groups, particularly women of reproductive age are more susceptible to anemia due to their increased physiological requirement.

In the present study it was noticed that 35.2 % of antenatal mothers had knowledge regarding anemia, iron rich food and iron supplementation while 49.2% were aware but still not practicing it. Another study by Nivedita et al also found that overall 52.5% of the participants had good knowledge regarding anemia, Iron rich food and iron supplementation but when specifically questioned only 39.87% were aware of and understood the term anemia.[8] A related study by Yadav et al from Karnataka also showed that knowledge regarding anemia and healthy diet was poor among pregnant women.[9]

In this study we have found that 44.8 % of the females were illiterate and only 3.2% were graduate and above level. Likewise another observer found that in his study that majority of 61.32% women were illiterate while only 1.95% educated up to graduate level.[10] It's important to develop strategies for improving the literacy status of the population so it will directly and indirectly improve the socio-economic status of the population.

This study also highlights the facts that majority of women 60.8% antenatal mother belonged to lower socioeconomic status and only 3.2% were in upper middle age group. Similar findings were noticed by Raksha M, in her study that more than half 51% of the women belonged to lower socioeconomic status and only 3 % belonged to upper class.[11]

In our study it was seen that majority 56.4 % women said that all the knowledge they had, was incorporated by health workers like ASHA, ANM of the area during their home or health centre visit, On contrary to this Rachana M, noticed in her study 62.56 % women had gained knowledge by TV or Radio, 26.20 % by friends and relatives while the remaining 11.22% got it via books and newspaper.[12]

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to understand the knowledge, attitude and practices of antenatal mothers regarding anemia. The present study supports that educating antenatal women about the importance of healthy diet during pregnancy is of paramount importance and promotion of fruits, green leafy vegetables and legumes which are easily accessible and available at affordable cost is a major contributing factor to reduce the incidence of anemia in antenatal women. Importance of deworming along with encouraging healthy behaviors like hand washing, use of footwear and proper disposal of feces should be explained to pregnant women along with provision of safe water, sanitation and hygiene services to break the cycle of infection and re-infection.

Knowledge regarding iron tablet should be explained to pregnant females and to take with meals if they cannot tolerate it empty stomach. Fresh fruits or fresh juices rich in Vitamin C should be included in their diet, dairy products to be taken as between meals snacks and avoid intake of tea by at least 2 hours from meal time.

Health knowledge is an important element to enable women to be aware of their health status and the importance of timely antenatal visits. Training to Grass root level worker regarding anemia may bring about a significant change in these women in their nutritional habits, ensuring early registration and regular follow up which will ultimately help in reducing the incidence of anemia.

It has been seen that there is strong association of anemia with socioeconomic status and educational status of the antenatal mothers, suggesting a need to develop strategies for intensive education since childhood and to improve the socioeconomic status of the population through poverty-alleviation programs and giving importance to literacy status of females.

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